COVID-19

Thinking Guide for Reopening Schools

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Kern County
Superintendent
of Schools
...advocates for children

Purpose

This guidance document was developed with the most current information known using source documents from the CDPH, CDE, CDC and others. It will be updated as relevant new data becomes available. This guide provides checklists, essential questions for consideration, and examples of best practices. Guidance on standards for quality distance learning is currently being developed by both the CDE and KCSOS, and will be available on the KCSOS website. While the guidance by its nature is not a mandate, this guidance serves as a "how to" for LEAs as they plan to safely reopen. LEAs need to work with the Kern County Public Health Department, KCSOS and local stakeholders to ensure that their protocols align with the most current research and community expectations. It is also reasonable to expect that the protocols schools implement will change as local conditions change.

We understand there are needed statutory changes to accommodate the instructional schedule model examples identified in this document.

The document contains the following sections:

    A.   **Safety Plans**

    B.   **Prior to Reopening and After Reopening Checklists**

    C.   **Essential Areas of Considerations**
        i.   Student Engagement
        ii.   Operations
        iii.   Labor Management and Policies
        iv.   Communications
        v.   Mental/emotional support for students/staff

    D.   **Be Prepared for Closing Partial or Entire School After the Year Begins**

    E.   **Resources**

A. Safety Plans

1. Conduct a work-site risk assessment

2. Update the site-based safety and/or injury and illness prevention plan to address issues specific to COVID-19 and steps that will be taken to prevent the spread of the virus, including:

   a. Plans for training for students, staff and parents on:
      i. Frequent hand washing
      ii. Cough and sneeze etiquette
      iii. Keeping hands away from the face
      iv. Use of face coverings (cloth coverings, masks, or face shields)
      v. Physical distancing guidelines
      vi. Screening for symptoms

   b. The role the school will play in alerting the local health department of COVID cases and in contact tracing in collaboration with the local health department.

3. Make the plan accessible to parents and employees. Involving staff, parents and the community in the development of the updated plan, including new procedures to prevent spread of the virus, can help develop understanding of and support for the plan and new procedures.

B. Prior to Reopening Checklist Overview

☐ Inspect all buildings, facilities, equipment, materials, etc. and determine status and needs for resuming and maintaining operations. Maintain records on what needs to be done prior to occupancy and the ongoing maintenance that is done after reopening.

☐ Consider acquiring hand washing stations for distribution across various campus locations (e.g. playground and common areas) to provide easy access without students and staff having to wait in long lines to wash their hands and/or touchless soap dispensers for all sinks to be used for hand washing; touchless trash cans if they are not already in use; and no-contact thermometers.

☐ Obtain the necessary cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and face coverings; identify new vendors for these supplies if necessary. Use cleaning products approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list and follow product instructions and Cal/OSHA requirements.

☐ Clean facility per CDC and CDPH guidelines.

☐ Change air conditioning/heater filters. Thoroughly ventilate the facility.

☐ Consider posting the CDC posters (hand washing, cover while sneezing/coughing) in classrooms and common areas.

☐ Consider installing sneeze guards in high traffic areas, especially offices, the cafeteria and the nurse's office.

☐ Prepare an isolation area within the school or district building for use in the event a student or staff member becomes ill while at the school/district.

☐ Inspect and clean buses.

☐ Conduct a parent survey, if needed, for planning purposes (*Sample survey under Resources section of this document).*

☐ Consider purchasing non-touch thermometers for symptom screening.

After Reopening Checklist Overview

☐ Modify maintenance staff cleaning routines to provide for disinfecting of surfaces touched by multiple people during the day (work areas, counters, restrooms, doorknobs, desks, and stair railings and other "high-touch" surfaces) several times a day.

☐ Clean classrooms, restrooms, all hallways, common areas, and the outside of lockers daily per CDC and CDPH guidelines.

☐ Ensure restrooms stay functional and stocked with soap and toilet paper.

☐ When safe to do so, leave doors open or ajar so that students and staff do not have to touch doorknobs.

☐ Implement routines for hand washing/using hand sanitizer at regular intervals.

☐ Provide hand sanitizer in each classroom that does not have access to soap and water.

☐ Discontinue use of shared food and beverage equipment in employee breakrooms.

☐ Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans.

☐ If students or staff become ill at school, have the individual use the isolation area until transportation can be arranged. Have a supply of masks available and require the ill person to use the mask while present.

☐ Clean buses after each route.

C. Essential Areas of Consideration

Area 1: Student Engagement

Overview: Choosing the instructional model that best meets the needs of your student population and families will be key to a robust reopening. To support this, consider the following while answering the critical questions below:

- How will the LEA ensure not only the needs of all students are addressed, but that the decision made will benefit all students, staff, and families?

- What planning time and infrastructure will teachers and staff need to discuss real-time feedback from students?

- What planning resources will staff need to work together to design and lead changes in their classrooms?

- What data will be collected as a feedback loop on students' experiences to inform planning?

- How will the LEA ensure students with disabilities and other special populations are fully integrated into every aspect of preparation and participation of the instructional model?

- How will Universal Design for Learning (UDL) be utilized during instructional planning time?

- How will the teacher teams determine essential state standards to focus learning?

- How will staff engage with the student to assess learning barriers and plan to find innovative ways to meet their needs?

1. What is it that we want kids to know?

Who will participate in determining what the essential learnings/standards are and what are the main areas of emphasis?

- Grade level/Department leads
- Summer curriculum committees
- District Instructional teams working on essential curriculum
- Determine learning loss and identify essential standards
- Some elementary districts focusing on Reading and Math Fluency
- Block scheduling in elementary for Reading and Math
- Intentional focused instruction with reading competencies focused on cross-curricular areas
- Explicit Direct Instruction with no room for extra, non-essential activities
- Some districts looking at units of instruction to whittle down to essential standards
- Catch up summer school
- Pacing guides that reflect acceleration
- Kindergarten Camp – Preview of what is to come
- Managing expectations – learning won't be the same when it isn't face to face
- Canvas Lessons to embed from district curriculum

Considerations:

- Communication to all stakeholders about not lowering the bar for student achievement. Ensure open and transparent communication about the approaches to address student learning.
- High expectations for all is the key.
- Distance learning needs to reset, explore models of good distance learning and try to recreate. Don't settle for what we have been doing if it is not optimal for kids, we may have to set a new bar of expectations for staff.
  - o Create a pacing guide that addresses the various models of what distance learning will address within the standards and expectations.
- How to maximize instructional time in a virtual world.
- What is best learning platform to use to ensure equity for all students.
- How to use CANVAS, Google Classroom, other platforms to instruct and extend learning.
- What about students new to the district?
- Pacing guides altered to reflect accelerated learning.

- Jump start to technology to train students on the basics of the platform.
- In-time scaffolding and remediation/support to fill the gaps of the previous year with a focus on current year standards.
- Utilizing a Flipped classroom approach.
- Utilize the potential mitigation loss revenues to develop new or enhanced methods/programs to ensure the neediest students are being addressed and provided the assistance needed to continue their learning.

2. How do we know they have learned and understood?

What kind of assessments of beginning levels and mastery levels will happen and what assessments will you use?

- Baseline data information is very important.
- Fountas and Pinnell K-2
- STAR Reading and STAR Math (Renaissance)
- Achieve 3000 for grades 3-8
- DIBELS and Acadience
- Next Gen Math
- AIMSWEB

Considerations:

- Assess for new learning and determine when to move on.
- What does mastery look like in an accelerated year?
- How to do grouping for intervention in a blended environment.
- Does distance learning just support classroom learning?
- Does distance learning have new learning, followed up by classroom support?
- Utilize remote teacher positions - properly trained in intervention and delivery. Create a specific job description for the role.

3. What do we do if they don't know it?

- How to handle remediation (take advantage of time in school).
- Small group instruction over Zoom.
- Distance learning that ensures extra practice for specific skill deficits.
- Accountability – grades, assignments, mastery – what do we collect and when, what do we assess and when?
- Cannot focus just on remediation but must have a focus with high expectations on acceleration.
- Great first instruction should be in person.
- Small groups should be targeted instruction.

- Possibly one week of initial instruction, followed by a week of remediation so that remediation is done during class time.
- Utilize KHAN Academy learning environment with a flipped classroom.

Considerations:

- Dealing with gaps in student engagement, attention and level.
- Virtual Teaching Position to work outside normal contract hours and handle all home schooling.
- Must embrace the Distance learning environment so that time is not wasted.
- Understand all the different learning tools for distance learning
- Teachers need to embrace a blended schedule to be productive.
- Ensure students are engaged when watching videos by having follow up questions and/or activities designed by the classroom teacher.
- Begin to talk about specifics:
    o What does a daily schedule look like for teachers and students?
    o When are the learning blocks?
    o What will be taught in school and what will be covered by distance learning?
- Develop a plan to allow teachers and staff the time to balance in class instruction and distance learning instruction.
- Ensure parent training is conducted for success with distance learning (English and Spanish).
- Ensure staff and student digital literacy training is conducted and supported.
- If trained in UDL, design lessons that meets the needs of all levels of students utilizing the hybrid model of instruction.

4. How will scheduling look on a school campus?

- How do we coordinate high school and elementary/middle school schedules? (To keep families together)
- How to coordinate in class learning with distance learning?
- How and when do we schedule deep cleaning?
- How do we coordinate childcare and instruction?
- Should we consider phasing in the reopening with specific groups?
- Should recess and lunch periods be staggered to accommodate social distancing?
- What is the best meal service option to accomodate social distancing (service in the classroom, cafeteria, or outside)?

Possible schedules

<u>Alternating weeks:</u>

- Group 1 - onsite instruction Monday-Thursday and distance learning Friday-following week.
- Group 2 - distance learning during the week Group 1 is onsite, then onsite (Monday-Thursday) the week Group 1 is on distance learning.
- Continue rotating groups each week.
- Deep cleaning on Friday.

<u>Same week:</u>

- Group 1 - Monday/Tuesday onsite instruction (Wednesday-Friday is distance learning), Wednesday deep cleaning.
- Group 2 -Thursday/Friday onsite instruction (Monday-Wednesday Distance Learning).

<u>Grade span:</u>

- TK-5 at school daily.
- 6-8 work remotely for three days and are onsite for two days.
- Classroom sizes will determine how many students can be in a classroom at a time to accommodate social distancing.

5. What should the LEA be thinking about when it comes to Special Education programs?

Overall Thoughts:
- Transportation – Social Distancing, PPE & Cleaning
- Facilities – Currently, it was shared that suctioning, tube-feeding, etc. needs to be done in a separate classroom for safety – that brings up facilities issues.
- Staffing – how to have sufficient staff to do deep cleaning in the medical fragile classrooms.

If it is a blended program – some in class and some at home:
- Transportation – scheduling
- What would be the definition of a Free and Appropriate Public Education in that instance?
- What would be the expected instructional minutes?
- If have to do the "Cohort Model", staffing would be huge; One SLP can only work with one Cohort (Classroom, essentially) and then do distance learning for any others on their caseload. Equity Issues abound. Further, putting students in a classroom would be impossible – can't add to a Cohort once it is established.
- What if parents opt out of site-based and want their student at home only – what does FAPE look like?

Guidance from the California Department of Education (CDE) Stronger Together Guidebook (quoted from CDE, June 8, 2020, page 19-21):

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/Essential Protective Gear (EPG)

- Consider the differing requirements of PPE/EPG for the differing populations of students with disabilities (for those requiring medical procedures, toileting, lifting and mobility assistance).
- Consider how the LEA will address students with disabilities who refuse or are not able to wear masks.

Planning for Students who are Medically Fragile and/or Immune Compromised

- Clearly define how staff can honor physical distancing recommendations, yet meet student medical, personal, or support needs.
- Determine how adequate space and facilities will be utilized to maintain health and safety of students and staff, especially when tending to individual student medical or personal needs.
- Build in flexibilities to keep students connected and included in the class and school community regardless of how much physical time they are able to attend school. Ensure the ability to quickly pivot to attending class virtually in order to retain some regular connection to teacher and peers.
- Determine any special or unique needs for students with disabilities related to planned district or schoolwide procedures and protocols related to daily health screening and temperature checks.

Physical Distancing

- Establish any necessary flexibilities for specific students-with- disabilities populations such as preschool-age, students with extensive support needs, behavioral challenges, etc.
- Establish flexibilities and plan for how to implement physical distancing given lack of space and facility limitations, particularly for children who will struggle with maintaining physical distancing.
- Address potential issues from physical distancing rules that could result in unintended segregation of students on campuses away from peers without disabilities.
- Plan for maintaining access to peers without disabilities and ensure that students remain in the least restrictive environment.
- Determine how the LEA will provide related services in instructional models while staying physically distant.
- Discuss how LEA staff and providers will conduct assessments while practicing physical distancing.

Ensuring a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- Work with each family and student to determine what FAPE looks like for each student and family during COVID-19. It may be different than the individualized education program (IEP) developed pre- COVID-19.
- Use the LEA model(s) for all students as the basis for establishing FAPE.
- Ensure children with disabilities are included in all offerings of school education models by using the IEP process to customize educational opportunities and provide supports when necessary.
- Use annual IEP to plan for traditional school year and while not required, it is suggested LEAs include distance learning plans or addendums to address distance learning needs during immediate or future school site closures.

Utilize and Update Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

- In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and CDE provided guidance that IEP amendments were not necessarily required for the immediate change to distance learning. However, the duration and overarching changes to education delivery in many cases will warrant changes to students' IEPs. This ensures that the IEPs account for the local delivery of education as school sites reopen, including contingencies for pivoting in and out of distance learning.
- In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each student with a disability has unique needs and it is the purpose of the education system to ensure every student has access to their grade-level standards and makes progress in their education . The IEP is the roadmap for each student with a disability, and in these challenging and evolving times including COVID-19 restrictions, it is critical that the IEP team meets and works with the family to jointly determine what is working for each student in distance learning as well as what accommodations and modality of learning allows the greatest access.

6. What should the LEA need to consider when it comes to English Learners (EL) Programs?

- How will designated and integrated ELD be provided?
- How will we support English learners with oral language development?
- How will we engage English learners' families and ensure they receive information and convey information in a language they understand?
- How will we ensure that the social–emotional and physical health needs of English learners are addressed?
- How will we ensure that English learners have the tools needed to engage in the curriculum, including access to technology as well as access to books or assignment packets?

7. What does Career Technical Education (CTE) look like?

- Develop a system to clean all equipment or tools being used using the health and safety guidance as the foundation for their planning. A process should be developed to ensure that all tools are cleaned each time they are returned so that they are ready for the next student or next class.
- In an instructional laboratory such as a shop, equipment is used numerous times during a class period and may need to be sanitized according to the health and safety guidance. Extra time should be spent at the beginning of the year to review typical safety precautions with additional time reviewing special circumstances centered on cleanliness.
- A process should be developed to ensure all equipment is clean and safe every time a class occurs. It would be appropriate to assign a student each period to ensure that equipment is properly cleaned following each use.
- To reduce the number of students in a CTE laboratory and maintain physical distancing, consider having half of the students remain in the classroom while the other half participates in the laboratory instruction.
- Educators should rely on online tools such as the California CareerZone, found at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/cc/
- Work with business and industry partners to develop a plan to maintain distancing requirements while students are on site.
- Look into alternatives to on-site placement. Are there opportunities for virtual industry opportunities?
- Work with teachers on potential methods to supervise and monitor students who are taking part in experiential learning opportunities.

1. How to handle transportation?

- Develop a policy with regard to wellness checks and facial coverings for students prior to boarding the bus (Wellness should be the same as required to attend school).
- Consider protective gear for staff who are assigned to Special Ed routes.
- Teach students how to sit on the bus to maintain that distance and, if possible, mark buses or block seats to assist in maintaining that distance.
- Scenario based planning based on school schedules of student attendance.
- Consider a plan to provide seating for 1 child/seat and what that would do to the number of runs needed to transport students.
- Design a plan for double routes: AM/PM schedule.
- Costs and Staffing of additional routes and cleaning supplies/time.
- Extending "walking distance" to reduce transportation needs. (Check Board Policies)
- Ensure social distancing at bus stops while loading and unloading.
- Load students from back to front when transporting to school.
- Load students in order of stops going home with first stop at the front of bus.

2. How to manage deep cleaning throughout the campus?

- Enhancing cleaning consistent with state requirements and CDC guidance (see Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations). Establish a daily cleaning schedule at all school sites and district offices to ensure frequent cleaning and regular disinfecting of surfaces.
- Considering the assignment of restrooms to specific classes and/or using procedures to indicate when a restroom/stall is clean or if it has been used since the last cleaning (e.g. use of red/green signs to indicate clean or dirty).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, desk and chairs, tables, keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.
- Drinking fountains and lunch card sanitation, if applicable.
- Restrooms surfaces cleaned throughout the day.

3. What should be thought about in regard to Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)?

- As recommended by the CDC, all staff should wear face coverings. Students should use cloth face coverings, especially in circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained. (Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools, CDE, page 6.)"

- Masks for students, staff, visitors—encourage acceptable face coverings to be brought from home and have back up supply for those who are not able to provide on their own.
- Supply staff and students with masks as provided by the CDE.
- Communication, signage, expectations throughout campus and in classrooms.
- Utilization of FEMA and CARES funding as a possibility to purchase PPE.
- Encourage hand washing regularly throughout the day.
- Sanitizer (foam) stationed throughout the campus. ** Actual stations might decrease "missing" foam and increase continual use**

4. How should we manage the Food Service Program?

- Simplifying menus and limiting items to be handled (hot and cold items).
- Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes). If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Individuals should wash their hands.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food and utensils and ensure the safety of children with food allergies.
- Are additional storage units needed?
- Need additional equipment- lead times will need to be considered.
- Ensure CDE requirements for feeding students is being followed.
- Meal pattern
- Area eligibility waivers?
- Consider eating space (Outside is the BEST option for now but is there seating, personnel to manage as well as additional staff for supervising students and cleaning?)
- Consider students eating in classrooms if large group gatherings are still in effect or unable to ensure social distancing in the cafeteria/multi-purpose room.
- If providing meals in the classroom, plan for cleaning and trash removal.
- Submit waivers for continued seamless summer feeding funding (currently State Aug. 30 and Federal until Sept. 30)
- Consider serving protocols for preschoolers.
- Potential of serving all day long in order to accommodate the limited number and staggered schedule.
- Staffing and number of staff on family leave? Need to accommodate for parents if school is not open every day?
- Drinking fountains and lunch card sanitation, if applicable.
- Suspend the use of shared tables and self-service buffets for food and condiments.
- Consider barriers at point of sale and other areas where maintaining social distancing is difficult.

5. What we should be aware of about the potential ADA Loss?

· Anticipate some parents will not want their children to return to school.
· Develop distance learning opportunities for students not returning to onsite instruction.
· Implement and adhere to any CDE policies and protocols related to attendance.

6. What do we consider when setting up classroom space?

· Determine maximum capacity for students of each classroom while meeting 6-foot physical distancing objectives.
· In accordance with CDC and CDPH guidance, ensure desks are a minimum of 6 feet apart and arrange desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.
· If necessary, utilize other campus spaces for instructional activities (lecture halls, gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, outdoors).
· If possible, broadcast to other classrooms and students distance learning at home.
· Consider staffing to ensure physical distancing for younger students and students with special needs.
· Arrange developmentally appropriate activities for smaller group activities and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain separation, when possible.
· Address physical distancing objectives as students move between classrooms.
· Address potential issues from physical distancing rules that could result in unintended segregation of students with disabilities on campuses away from peers without disabilities.

7. What should we consider for Staff?

· Develop a plan that ensures physical distancing among staff in their work environment to reduce spread of the virus that includes:
   o Avoiding staff congregation in work environments, break rooms, staff rooms, and bathrooms.
   o Avoiding grouping staff together for training or staff development. Consider conducting the training virtually or, if in-person, ensure distancing is maintained.

· Adjust staff schedules (through negotiations) to accommodate new student schedules and physical distancing strategies.

· In accordance with Cal/OSHA regulations and guidance, evaluate all workspaces to ensure that employees can maintain physical distancing to the extent possible.

· Where possible, rearrange workspaces to incorporate a minimum of 6 feet between employees and students.

· If physical distancing between workspaces or between employees and students and visitors is not possible, add physical barriers that cannot be moved to separate workspaces.

1. How should we involve our Labor/Management teams?

- Collaboration with bargaining units should be open, transparent, and ongoing to address this dynamic situation.
- Gain an understanding in student engagement needs, operational needs, and wellness needs.
- Collaboration with bargaining units early in the development of memorandum of understandings (MOU) to address changes in employee working conditions can help explore and resolve areas needing attention.
- Training and expectations of staff (including wellness and PPE) should be conducted prior to the reopening of schools.
- Signage displayed with safety and hygiene expectations throughout the campus.
- It is critical that employees needing to self-isolate because of COVID-19 are encouraged to stay at home to prevent further infection. Information on government programs supporting employee sick leave and workers compensation is available HERE.
- Be mindful of current Collective Bargaining Agreements, MOU's, and other leaves which impact staff.

2. What policies should we consider when managing school visitors and access to campus?

- Under what circumstances are non-employees and non-students allowed on campus?
  - o Attending an assessment, IEP, or governance meeting (can Zoom be utilized?)
  - o Dropping items off for a student (stay in office lobby)
  - o All other reasons, such as classroom volunteers, should not be permitted at this time absent prior approval for business reasons.

- Review BP 1250 – this could provide guidance for school visitors. Be sure to have board approval and support.
- All visitors should be wearing a mask. Communicate through signage and messaging that this is a requirement. (You may choose to have a supply as backup for those who may have not brought a mask with them).
- All visitors must report directly to the school office and remain in the office.
- Visitors that must be on campus should schedule an appointment and be approved by site administration.
- Encourage potential visitors to use virtual means for business with the school whenever possible.
- Establish protocol for accepting deliveries safely.

- Student Considerations:

  o Active Screening. Engage in symptom screening as students enter campus and buses, consistent with public health guidance, which includes visual wellness checks and temperature checks with no-touch thermometers (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), and ask all students about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.

  o Passive Screening. Instruct parents to screen students before leaving for school (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100 .4 degrees Fahrenheit, observe for symptoms outlined by public health officials) and to keep students at home if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 .

  o If a thermometer requiring a touch method (under the tongue or arm, forehead, etc.) is the only type available, it should only be used when a fever is suspected and caution is taken by temperature screeners, such as by wearing gloves, eye protection, and a mask.

  o Thermometers must be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use.

  o All students must wash or sanitize hands as they enter campuses and buses.

  o Provide supervised, sufficient points of access to avoid larger gatherings.

  o Use privacy boards or clear screens when practicable.

  o If a student is symptomatic while entering campus or during the school day:

    Students who develop symptoms of illness while at school should be separated from others right away, preferably isolated in an area through which others do not enter or pass. If more than one student is in an isolation area, ensure physical distancing;

    Any students or staff exhibiting symptoms should be required to immediately wear a face covering and wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a health care facility;

    Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult;

    Follow established guidelines for triaging students in the health office, recognizing not all symptoms are COVID-19 related;

    Advise parents of sick students that students are not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation;

- Staff Considerations:

o Active Screening. Engage in symptom screening as staff enter worksites, consistent with public health guidance, which includes visual wellness checks and temperature checks with no-touch thermometers (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), and ask all staff about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.

o Passive Screening: Instruct staff to self-screen before leaving for work (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, check for symptoms outlined by public health officials) and to stay home if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

o If a thermometer requiring a touch method (under the tongue or arm, forehead, etc.) is the only type available, it should only be used when a fever is suspected.

o Thermometers must be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use.

o All staff must wash or sanitize hands as they enter worksites.

o Exclude employees who are exhibiting symptoms from the workplace.

o Staff members who develop symptoms of illness should be sent to medical care. Have emergency substitute plans in place.

o Create a procedure for reporting the reasons for the exclusions.

o Advise sick staff members not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.

3. How should we handle events and outside organizations?

- Current guidelines establish gatherings of events fall under Stage 4 in the Governor's Reopening Guidelines, as well as county and city guidelines which may be more restrictive.
- Establish policies on range of on campus events: back-to-school, sports and concerts
    - o Pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible, and promote social distancing of at least 6 feet between people if events are held. Limit group size to the extent possible.
- If sporting events are permitted at a later date, can this be achieved without an audience or spectators.
- After school programs such as daycare and ASES fall under the same social distancing requirements as classroom instruction.
- Use of school sites by outside organizations should be restricted according to Stage 4 of the Governor's Reopening Guidelines and the district's ability to ensure safety and maintenance.
    - o Evaluate whether and to what extent external community organizations can safely utilize the site and campus resources. Ensure external community organizations that use the facilities also follow the school's health and safety plans and CDPH guidance.
    - o Review facility use agreements and establish common facility protocols for all users of the facility.
- Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible.

1. What should we consider when communicating with stakeholders?

Effective school reopening will require diligent efforts to communicate with the school board, parents, staff, and community members. Careful reopening plans will be for naught if parents and staff are not confident about the measures in place. When schools open with significant modifications to schedules, classes, or logistics, minimizing chaos and confusion will depend on clear and consistent communication.

Among the most important considerations is the health and safety of students and school personnel as schools reopen. Schools need to provide clear communication on steps the school is taking, including re-opening modifications and procedures/protocols for:

- Enhanced cleaning/disinfection efforts;
- Hand washing schedule/education;
- Wellness checks (e.g. taking of temperatures of students, isolation procedures if a student/ staff shows symptoms);
- Social distancing efforts (e.g. classroom alterations, staggered schedules, no sharing of personal items, lunch/recess accommodations, etc.);
- Modifications to workspaces and/or high-traffic areas;
- How students/staff will be educated regarding new protocols;
- School-site visitor policy;
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE);
- Protocol if one or more positive COVID case(s) on campus and/or if a student or staff member has a family member that tests positive (schools must understand their legal responsibilities/ privacy rights for communicating information about cases of the virus on school campuses).

2. Should we utilize surveys/parent engagement?

Your school community (e.g., parents, staff, and other community members) will want to be "heard" during the re-opening planning process as much as they will want to be communicated to. To the extent possible, considerations should be made to involve stakeholders in the process so the most informed decisions may be made. One way to do this is to survey parents and staff prior to making any final determination on your path forward.

3. What methods of communication should we use?

Information should be disseminated via the district's normal communication methods: mass phone/text systems, website, social media, staff email, web site postings, hard copy letters, school newsletters, and traditional media.

4. What should we use for student education/signage?

Once students are back on campus, it will be critically important that they are educated on the procedures for the "new normal." This will be especially important for younger students who might not easily grasp the concepts like "social distancing," especially in a school setting.

5. Are there additional communication assumptions/considerations?

- Emphasis that safety is your top priority, but there is no guarantee for absolute safety in an environment which is rapidly changing.
- Be prepared to change plans on the fly and communicate those modified plans quickly.
- Recognize that there are a variety of opinions regarding COVID-19 procedures and approaches, and a range of emotional responses to the pandemic.
- Acknowledge that there will likely be differing procedures and protocols at school districts throughout Kern County.
- KCSOS will provide assistance, guidance, and samples of communication for districts. Recommendations for communicating out information now should include:

    o Notification to parents about the LEA's planned Summer program and how that will be delivered.

    o Notification to parents about the LEA's planned Fall start date and include the expected student attendance calendar.

What should we be considering in the area of social and emotional support for our schools?

Districts/Schools will need to determine how they will address and support the social/emotional well-being of students and staff. Some students and/or staff may be anxious about their risk when going back to school, some may have experienced trauma during the time school was closed such as the loss of one or more family or friends, domestic violence, child abuse, etc. In addition, some families may have experienced job loss and be anxious about their futures. Social/emotional support during re-entry can help staff and students, especially those who are struggling to adjust to being back at school.

Considerations:

- Plan for a positive, supportive re-entry to school focused on helping students with the transition and adjusting to changes in the school structure/schedule.
- Notify teachers, staff, students, and parents about support services available.
- Post information on school district website and on social media for parents regarding helping children cope with the virus and any tragedies or loss resulting from it.
- Help principals and teachers understand how to:

  o Quickly identify students, families or staff members experiencing problems adjusting

  o Provide personal supports to those struggling with minor adjustment problems

  o Provide specialized assistance and referrals when necessary for those who experience major challenges.

- Activate mental health/student support service team (school counselor, community Mental Health Partners, (CSCT) to plan for students and staff, in conjunction with local mental health services staff, including post-traumatic stress syndrome counseling.
- Share information about availability of counseling services with staff and families. For example, HR could provide staff with information about access to Employee Assistance Programs that can provide virtual counseling services. Students who have experienced loss or trauma during the COVID-19 pandemic will need access to counseling services with follow-up care. Schools may have site-based counseling services for students who have experienced loss or trauma or be able to provide information about community-based counseling services.

Mental Health and Well-Being of All Guidance from the CDE (quoted directly from the Stronger Together Guidelines, June 8, 2020):

The entire education community has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The community has experienced high levels of stress from the disruption of daily lives and worries about the physical health of oneself and others, and many have been under financial strains. For many, especially children, living with these strains in the household and community, the stress and trauma threaten to have long-lasting negative impacts on the body and brain. Each person will need additional supports and systems that will help to rebalance and refocus on the task of learning and being productive in a school community.

When considering the reopening of schools, LEAs should contemplate not only the physical health of their constituents but also their mental health and wellness and make it a priority within their planning. LEAs should examine the availability and accessibility of mental health resources and supports for their students, families, and staff members as they return to school, continue distance learning, or participate in a blended model. LEAs should ensure that strong partnerships with mental health supports are created and a system is in place to allow for student and staff support referrals without wait time. This checklist is intended to help local LEAs in their planning for the reopening of schools.

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS: WHOLE SCHOOL SAFETY AND PREVENTION PLANNING

What is the LEA doing to promote wellness of students on a daily basis?

- Conduct universal screening to identify social–emotional needs of students.
- Share student mental health need assessment data with stakeholders during LCAP stakeholder engagement process.
- Encourage school boards to adopt policies that support staff and student wellness.
- Consider strategies to become a trauma-responsive school system to support the school community.
- Conduct routine check-ins using a trauma- and resilience-informed lens.
- Develop a system to connect with students and families to promote attendance.
- Engage with students and families using culturally responsive techniques.
- Are staff trained in providing supports through a trauma-informed and responsive lens?
- Use Psychological First Aid to assess immediate needs and provide support.
- Use professional development time to increase trauma knowledge and skills.
- What is the LEA doing to reduce the stigma associated with accessing services?
- Engage staff in professional development about mental health destigmatization.

- Has the LEA adopted a suicide prevention policy?
    - o Share the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 widely . (Include it on staff and secondary student ID cards .)
    - o Include mental health and wellness resources on district and school websites and in communications with families (newsletters, emails, texts, robocalls, etc .) .

- Has the LEA engaged the school community and mental health practitioners in a survey to understand its constituents' needs in order to build upon existing assets and determine the current mental health needs of staff, students, and families? (For example, the CDE offers a free CalSCHLS Learning from Home Survey.)
    - o Conduct schoolwide mental health assessment that includes trauma and stress.
    - o Assess and review necessary staffing ratios to meet student needs (teachers, support services, etc .)

TIER 1: COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

How are LEAs engaging community-based and local government partners in supporting the mental wellness of staff and students?

- Collaborate with stakeholders, such as county behavioral health departments and local HMOs and PPOs, to promote staff wellness and provide workshops and supports regarding adult and student mental health, trauma responsiveness, suicide prevention, and resilience.
- Suggest all LEAs (county offices of education, districts, and school sites) include information and links to increase access to mental health and wellness resources.
- Share resources for basic needs: food banks, Medi-Cal, Covered California, energy programs, Section 8 housing, prescription and patient assistance programs, unemployment supports, local job postings, local CalFresh and food distribution, free internet access, etc .
- Provide a link to CDE's Resources for Students in Crisis: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/studentcrisishelp.asp.

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS: STAFF WELLNESS

- What supports are available to promote staff wellness and prevent burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress?
- Provide trainings on secondary traumatic stress and self-care (e.g., Support for Teachers Affected by Trauma [STAT]) .
- Promote mindfulness techniques and staff social supports.
- Provide routine communication (in-person or virtual) to staff members to encourage self-care, including examples, and examples of wellness (e g., saying no, accepting oneself and others, and not being at 100% all the time).

- Promote the use of staff support groups to enhance staff cohesion and coping.
- Provide a monthly informational insert in staff checks about mental wellness and local resources.

TIER 1: CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

How do LEAs promote safety and consistency in the classroom?

- Establish and implement daily routines for both in-person and remote delivery.
- Include stress management or mindfulness practices in daily classroom routine.
- Consider impact of stress and trauma when assessing and supporting students.
- Use restorative circles (in-person and virtually).

TIER 2/3: EARLY AND TARGETED INTERVENTION FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

What supports are currently in place to assist students and staff with mental health issues?

- Provide staff with resources from their Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Align district funding, policies, and programs to fully support mental wellness for students and staff.
- Implement or scale up Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to promote social–emotional competencies among students. Promote and support adult SEL.
- Maintain or expand student mental health services using LCFF, ESSA Title II and IV funds, or other leveraged resources.

What technology is being used to deliver mental health services remotely? Is this technology platform HIPAA or FERPA compliant? Is it secure?

- Review district policy and coordinate with mental health partners to ensure confidentiality.
- Assess what supports are currently in place to assist students with mental health issues.
- Encourage students to use counseling services as needed. Promote messaging to remove stigma.
- See that staff are trained in evidence-based practices (CBITS, SSET, DBT for Schools, etc.).
- Provide information about and access to tele-behavioral health services for counseling services (group, individual).

D. Be Prepared for Closing Partial or Entire School After the Year Begins

Development of defined plan for closing partial or entire schools again if certain conditions are met will facilitate prompt action should the virus surge or cause a second wave of cases. The plan may also address the conditions under which a classroom will be sent home for isolation and/or what happens if family member(s) of a student or staff member tests positive.

- Identify an area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms during hours of operation and ensure that children are not left without adult supervision.
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Advise sick staff members or children not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self- monitor for symptoms, and to follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms follow appropriate CDC guidance for home isolation.
- Determining partial or entire school closure:

    o Partial Closure: Close off areas used by any sick person and do not use them until they have been cleaned. Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect to reduce risk to individuals cleaning. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.

    o Entire Closure: Close entire school campus for a period of 2-5 days to conduct deep cleaning and sanitation of the campus. This would be based on input from Public Health.

    o Work closely with the public health department to determine if temporary closures would be needed to ensure proper deep cleaning is performed before reopening.

E. Resources

Stronger Together Guidelines to Reopening Schools (CDE)

CDPH Guidance on Reopening Schools

Interim Guidelines for Schools and Camps (CDC)

Guidelines for Schools (CDC)

COVID-19 Response Main Page (State of California)

California Resilience Roadmap (State of California)

Criteria for Moving to Stage 2 on the Resilience Roadmap (State of California)

California State Guidance for Offices (CDPH)

Emotional Health resources (State of California)

Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus (Cal/OSHA)

California Department of Education COVID page (CDE)

California Collaborative for Educational Excellence

Distance Learning Consortium (CCEE)

Reimagine Teaching – Great site for a multitude of resources (TNTP)

Restarting School – Planning for Acceleration in the 2020-2021 School Year (TNTP)

Educational Leadership: A New Reality: Getting Remote Learning Right (ASCD)

Small School Districts' Association (SSDA)

A Blueprint for Back to School (American Enterprise Institute)

Social and Emotional Learning: Reopening Schools (CASEL)

Considerations of Reopening Schools (McKinsey & Company)

COVID 19 and School Closures – What Can Countries Learn from Past Emergencies (Brookings)

Parent and Staff Re-opening Survey Example (Rosedale Union School District)

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